

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 137

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 5, 2017

Sponsored by:

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Senator THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Greenstein and Ruiz

SYNOPSIS

Condemns violence, bigotry, and hatred displayed by white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 11th and 12th, 2017; reaffirms State's commitment to respecting and protecting ethnic, racial, and religious diversity.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/8/2017)

1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** condemning the violence, bigotry, and
2 hatred displayed by the white supremacists in Charlottesville,
3 Virginia, on August 11th and 12th, 2017, and reaffirming the
4 State’s commitment to respecting and protecting ethnic, racial,
5 and religious diversity.
6
7 **WHEREAS**, On August 11th and 12th, 2017, a group of white
8 supremacists, which included members of the Ku Klux Klan and
9 neo-Nazis, gathered in Charlottesville, Virginia, pursuant to a
10 permit to protest the removal of a statue of Confederate General
11 Robert E. Lee; and
12 **WHEREAS**, As a result of the actions of the white supremacists, violent
13 clashes with counter protestors ensued, resulting in dozens of
14 injuries, the death of a woman, Heather Heyer, when a car driven
15 by a white supremacist plowed through a crowd of people, and the
16 death of two Virginia State Police officers, H. Jay Cullen and Berke
17 M. M. Bates, whose helicopter crashed while patrolling the scene of
18 the protest; and
19 **WHEREAS**, People from many walks of life throughout the nation
20 quickly condemned the hatred and bigotry displayed and the
21 damage and violence incited by the white supremacists in
22 Charlottesville; and
23 **WHEREAS**, In an address to the nation, on June 11, 1963, President
24 John F. Kennedy recognized that “[d]ifficulties over segregation
25 and discrimination exist in every city, in every State of the Union,
26 producing in many cities a rising tide of discontent that threatens
27 the public safety. . . In a time of domestic crisis men of good will
28 and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or
29 politics”; and
30 **WHEREAS**, President Ronald Reagan, speaking at the 1981 national
31 convention of the National Association for the Advancement of
32 Colored People (NAACP), said, “A few isolated groups in the
33 backwater of American life still hold perverted notions of what
34 America is all about. Recently in some places in the nation there’s
35 been a disturbing reoccurrence of bigotry and violence . . . I would
36 like to address a few remarks to those groups who still adhere to
37 senseless racism and religious prejudice . . . I would say to them,
38 ‘You are the ones who are out of step with our society. You are the
39 ones who willfully violate the meaning of the dream that is
40 America. And this country, because of what it stands for, will not
41 stand for your conduct’”; and
42 **WHEREAS**, President George W. Bush, speaking at the 2000 national
43 convention of the NAACP, stated, “For our nation, there is no
44 denying the truth that slavery is a blight on our history, and that
45 racism, despite all the progress, still exists today”; and
46 **WHEREAS**, On March 18, 2008, President Barack Obama stated, “I
47 have asserted a firm conviction, a conviction rooted in my faith in
48 God and my faith in the American people, that working together we

1 can move beyond some of our old racial wounds, and that in fact
2 we have no choice if we are to continue on the path of a more
3 perfect union”; and

4 **WHEREAS**, In keeping with this State’s tradition of welcoming
5 diversity and tolerance, organizations throughout New Jersey
6 hosted vigils in the days following the Charlottesville protests in
7 response to the violence and damage; and

8 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey is one of the most ethnically, racially, and
9 religiously diverse states in the nation, with foreign-born
10 individuals comprising one in five residents, according to the
11 United States Census Bureau, and with one in four residents
12 identifying as Black, African American, Latino, or Asian; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Languages other than English are common in New Jersey,
14 including Spanish, Indic, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog,
15 and many others, and according to the Rutgers’ School of Public
16 Affairs and Administration, almost 30 percent of the State’s
17 population over five years of age speaks a language other than
18 English; and

19 **WHEREAS**, The residents of New Jersey also have a long tradition of
20 respecting and honoring the freedom to pursue a religious belief
21 and to be diverse in our faiths, including Catholic, Protestant,
22 Jewish, Islamic, and Eastern religious faiths, as well as other faith-
23 based beliefs; and

24 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s commitment to freedom and liberty for all
25 persons dates to before the Civil War, when more than 50,000
26 slaves were led to freedom by operators of the Underground
27 Railroad in New Jersey, which rapidly expanded with the assistance
28 of the Quaker population in southwestern New Jersey; and

29 **WHEREAS**, This rich diversity has helped to make New Jersey a
30 stronger, more vital and robust State, one in which bigotry and
31 hatred are never acceptable and have no place in our shared value
32 system; and

33 **WHEREAS**, It is fitting and proper for this House to condemn the
34 violence, bigotry, and hatred displayed by the white supremacists in
35 Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 11th and 12th, 2017, and to
36 reaffirm this State’s commitment to respecting and protecting
37 ethnic, racial, and religious diversity; now, therefore,

38

39 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

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41 1. This House condemns the violence, bigotry, and hatred
42 displayed by the white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia, on
43 August 11th and 12th, 2017, and reaffirms the State’s commitment
44 to respecting and protecting ethnic, racial, and religious diversity.

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46 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
47 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President

1 and Vice President of the United States, and every member of
2 Congress elected from this State.

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STATEMENT

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7 This resolution condemns the violence, bigotry, and hatred
8 displayed by the white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia, on
9 August 11th and 12th, 2017, and reaffirms the State's commitment
10 to respecting and protecting ethnic, racial, and religious diversity.
11 On August 11th and 12th, 2017, a group of white supremacists,
12 which included members of the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazis,
13 gathered in Charlottesville, Virginia, pursuant to a permit to protest
14 the removal of a statute of Confederate General Robert E. Lee.
15 Because of the actions of the white supremacists, violent clashes
16 with counter protestors ensued, resulting in dozens of injuries and
17 three deaths.